



SWACO

NEWS & UPDATES

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SWACO, Columbus and quasar energy Share Innovation Award

COLUMBUS - The Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) in partnership with the City of Columbus and quasar energy group was awarded today with the 2012 Kevin M. Bonzo Solid Waste Innovator Award from the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Ohio Chapter for the quasar energy group anaerobic digester.

The City of Columbus and SWACO partnered with quasar energy group to construct and operate the Columbus anaerobic digestion renewable energy facility. The system processes sewage sludge, regional food waste and FOG (fats, oil and grease) from the City of Columbus, generating 3,600 gasoline gallon equivalents (GGE) of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG).

"This project took a decade to develop. But the agreement is sustainable, economically and environmentally," SWACO Executive Director Ronald J. Mills said. "This agreement can serve as a model of public-private partnerships in that it benefits us all."

The Solid Waste Association of North America's Excellence Awards Program recognizes outstanding solid waste programs and facilities that advance the practice of environmentally and economically sound solid waste management.

As gasoline and diesel prices rise to approximately \$4 a gallon, more and more central Ohio communities and fleet operations are looking for ways to avoid drastic price fluctuations at the pumps. By converting more of their fleets to CNG fuel, SWACO, the City of Columbus,

and others have been able to take advantage of quasar's pump price of \$2.25 at the digester.

Vehicles that use CNG are better for the environment. It is estimated that CNG-powered engines produce 60% to 75% less pollutants compared to vehicles that run on fossil fuels. In addition, this new green fuel reduces our nation's dependence on petroleum and foreign based energy and contributes to growing Ohio's clean energy economy.

"SWACO and the City of Columbus are true innovators in sustainable waste management - quasar is proud to be part of this initiative. The project demonstrates the impact sustainable waste solutions can have on building our renewable energy economy while improving the environment," states quasar President Mel Kurtz.

The digester has several benefits. For one, disposal costs are cheaper for cities and companies. The tipping price (or fee to dispose) at the digester is \$33.50 per ton versus \$42.75 per ton at the landfill. With the City delivering 25,000 tons a year to the digester, an annual savings of at least \$231,000 is realized. Another benefit is less landfill waste keeps more land available for other uses and brings about a savings from delayed or avoided landfill construction costs.

"We are honored to be the recipient of the SWANA Solid Waste Innovator Award for the successful public-private partnership between the City of Columbus, SWACO and Quasar Energy, " said Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman. "This innovative project takes what would have been waste and generates 2.6 million gallons of CNG for use in vehicles.

This project is good for the environment and for the economy. It has saved the city \$231,000 per year in disposal costs and about \$2 per gallon in fuel savings compared with diesel."